

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 26 No. 4

April 15, 1958

Whole No. 307

The Pseudonyms of Edward S. Ellis

by Denis R. Rogers

Introduction

Since the publication of my article on the above subject in "The Dime Novel Round-Up" (November 1954 to January 1955), enough fresh material has come to my notice to merit a second article. This article has been split into four parts. The first discusses Ellis and the use of stock pen names. The second covers Ellis' connection with the Barnum juveniles. The third sets out the evidence on a number of new pseudonyms. The fourth deals with new information about some of the pen names considered in the previous article. Finally a revised classified appendix is given at the end of the article.

Part 1—Stock Pen Names

The use of stock pen-names by some publishers has complicated research into the pseudonyms of the dime novel and story paper authors. Even well known authorities in this field have assumed that such a prolific author as Edward S. Ellis would have been connected with stock pen-names. In fact the evidence pointing that way is gossamer thin. Certainly there is as yet no proof that anything by Ellis ever appeared under a stock pen-name and there is no substitute for proof. The assumptions of Miller, for example, have only added confusion to the jigsaw puzzle of pen names and their true authors. It is not sufficient that names be linked with authors because of similarity or of circumstantial evidence. By analogy,



Denis R. Rogers

therefore, until it can be proved that Ellis shared a pen name with other authors, he is entitled to be considered innocent of that bad habit!

The evidence on which Ellis has been judged guilty of "pseudonymic misconduct," if I may coin a phrase, appears to be connected with two pen names only—Lt. R. H. Jayne and A United States Detective. It can be said right away that Ellis did write under both these pen names. Of that fact there is no doubt.

Lt. R. H. Jayne was first used for contributions to a Frank Leslie story paper and then later for other story papers and for cloth bound books. Ellis gave it as one of his pen names in correspondence with the Library of Congress. It has been verified by

reference to several titles reprinted under Ellis' own name and the writer has books in his collection with the author on the spine given as Ellis and on the title page as Jayne. "A United States Detective" has been proved to have been used by Ellis for crime tales published in "Saturday Night."

"A United States Detective" was also used for detective stories appearing in "The Boys of New York." That fact has been taken as evidence that Ellis was one of a number of authors who wrote for Norman Munro/Sinclair Tousey under that name. It may well be that the stories in "The Boys of New York" by "A United States Detective" were written by more than one author—in other words that "A United States Detective" was a stock pen name of Norman Munro/Sinclair Tousey. But that does not mean that Ellis was necessarily one of those authors. When Ellis used the name "A United States Detective" it was for stories appearing in "Saturday Night." It is hardly likely that Davis & Elverson and Munro & Tousey would have freely interchanged the same author under the same pseudonym. Far more probable is it that Davis & Elverson or Ellis would have sought to restrain Norman Munro from also using the pen name, had it not been patently clear that protection of such a general pseudonym would not be upheld in Court.

In many years of Ellis research I have found only three of his tales originating in Norman Munro publications. They are "The Telegraph Messenger Boys", "Jack Darcy" and "My Plucky Boy Tom." This is not surprising, because Ellis was the mainstay of George Munro until Old Sleuth and the Seaside Library finally put Munro on the high road to fortune. For example, of the 354 known numbers of Munro's Ten Cent Novels nearly a third were by Ellis. When one remembers the feud between the Munro brothers, it is not difficult to understand why Ellis did not write profusely for both.

On the evidence available, therefore, it seems improbable that "A United States Detective" was ever used by Ellis for original contributions to any story paper other than Davis & Elverson's "Saturday Night." Just as improbable is it that anyone other than Ellis wrote the stories by "A United States Detective," which appeared in "Saturday Night."

Lt. R. H. Jayne has been linked with W. O. Stoddard as well as with Ellis through one story, "Lone Wolf, the Apache Chief." This tale first appeared as a serial by Lt. R. H. Jayne in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly from 19 September to 21 November, 1874 (Nos. 413 to 422). Between numbers 452 (19 June 1875) and 678 (18 October 1880) a booklet edition of "Lone Wolf" was advertised extensively. These advertise-

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Published Monthly at

821 Vermont Street, Lawrence, Kansas

Edited by

Edward T. LeBlanc, 87 School St., Fall River, Mass.

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Lawrence, Kansas

Price \$2.00 per year

Assistant Editor

Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass.

Asst. Ed. Photography—Charles Duprez, 228 Larch Lane, Smithtown, L.I., N.Y.

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ments fall into three distinct periods. From 19 June 1875 to 10 February 1877 (Nos. 452 to 538) the author is given as Lt. R. H. Jayne. It seems that there were two editions in this period for the advertisements from No. 519 (30 September 1876) onwards offer a 128 page 8vo booklet at 15c, whereas I have a 56 page 10x6 1/4" 30c booklet in my collection, advertisements on the back cover of which point to publication in March or April 1876.

With No. 539 the size of Frank Leslie's Boys & Girls' Weekly was enlarged and the advertisements ceased until No. 591 (16 February 1878), when the author is shown as W. O. Stoddard. This period ended with No. 623 (28 September 1879).

The third period commences with No. 628 (2 November 1879), when the author becomes Robert H. Jayne. That advertisement appeared in most numbers until the paper ceased offering booklets altogether from No. 679 onwards. Throughout the second and third periods the booklets were offered as 128 pages 8vo at 15c.

The change of name in the second of the three batches of advertisements from Lt. R. H. Jayne to W. O. Stoddard has led to the assumption that Stoddard (a flesh and blood author) and Ellis shared the pseudonym, "Lt. R. H. Jayne," which was the property of Frank Leslie. For the following reasons I do not consider that assumption warranted:

- (1) So far as I know no copy of "Lone Wolf" with W. O. Stoddard as author has ever been seen.
- (2) No other Jayne title has ever been linked in any way with W. O. Stoddard.
- (3) All the cloth reprints of this story, whether under the title "Through Apache Land" or "Ned in the Mountains" are by Lt. R. H. Jayne or Edward S. Ellis.
- (4) Lt. R. H. Jayne is in all probability the best known of all the Ellis pen names and was used for other publications than those of Frank Leslie. That could hardly have been done with a stock

pen name.

- (5) Had Jayne at any time been a publisher's stock pen name, Ellis could hardly have sued Hurst & Company, as he did in 1910, to restrain the New York publishers from reprinting Jayne stories under Ellis' own name.

My own theory is that the name W. O. Stoddard as author of "Lone Wolf" was a typesetting error, which went uncorrected from Nos. 591 to 623. In support of this theory it should be noted that the catalogue of The American News Company in The Uniform Trade List Annual for 1877 (Office of The Publishers' Weekly, New York, August 1877) lists on page 9: "Lone Wolf, the Apache Chief" by Lieutenant R. H. Jayne (at 15c) as one of Frank Leslie's Boys' Library Series (8vo: heavy paper covers; Illustrated). August 1877 falls within the period of Stoddard advertisements in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly. That would mean, of course, that W. O. Stoddard had nothing to do with Lt. R. H. Jayne. I believe it is just as simple as that.

Perhaps it is worth noting that the third set of advertisements has one strange point of its own, in that the author's name is given as Robert H. Jayne. Nowhere else have I seen the name other than as Lt. R. H. Jayne. If any reader of this article has or has seen a copy of "Lone Wolf" by Robert H. Jayne, I would appreciate learning the details.

There is one authenticated case of Ellis sharing a name, in that he wrote at least one story, which was published as by P. T. Barnum. Cashing in on the popularity of a famous person outside the field of literature was frequently resorted to by the story paper and dime novel publishers (e.g., the stories by Augustin Daly and Tony Pastor put out by George Munro). Such "pen-names" cannot be regarded as stock pen-names, but there is enough similarity to warrant this brief mention now.

However this part can be concluded with the statement that until proof to the contrary is forthcoming, it

must be doubted whether Ellis ever wrote under a stock pen name.

End of Part One.

The editor wishes to apologize to Ray Mengar for causing so much confusion in listing his address incorrectly in the December 1957 issue. The correct address is 742 First Ave., San Diego 1, California.

Old Story Papers

#5

BOYS OF NEW YORK

by William B. Farns

(continued from last issue)

I will list here the complete Frank Reade stories that I have in my fine long run of the last 285 issues of the fine old paper. Please bear in mind that the larger part of these stories ran to from 45 to 70 chapters with 12 or 14 illustrations and when reprinted in Wide Awake Library they were reprinted in two parts with 28 to 32 triple column pages, each part. Truly they were long stories indeed.

#739, "Frank Reade Jr. and His Greyhound of the Air; or, The Search for a Mountain of Gold," #765 "From Pole to Pole; or, Frank Reade Jr.'s Strange Submarine Voyage," #793 "Frank Reade Jr. and His Electric Coach; or, The Search for the Isle of Diamonds," #817 "Frank Reade Jr.'s Electric Ice Boat; or, Lost in the Land of Crimson Snow," #842 "Frank Reade Jr.'s Electric Cyclone; or, Thrilling Adventures in No Man's Land," #864 "Frank Reade Jr. and His New Electric Air Ship, the Eclipse; or, Fighting the Chinese Pirates," #885 "Frank Reade Jr.'s New Electric Air Ship, the Zephyr; or, From North to South Around the Globe," #922 "Frank Reade Jr.'s Catamaran of the Air; or, Wild and Wonderful Adventures in North Australia," #952 "Frank Reade Jr.'s Sky Scraper; or, North and South Around the World."

There were about 28 or 29 Frank Reade stories in all in Boys of New York, the earliest starting in #28.

The complete Jack Wright stories in my file are as follows: #906 "Jack Wright, the Boy Inventor, and His Phantom Frigate; or, Fighting the Coast Wreckers of the Gulf," #940 "Jack Wright, the Boy Inventor, Working for the Union Pacific Railroad; or, Over the Continent on the Electric," #967 "Jack Wright and His Electric Air Monitor; or, The Scourge of the Pacific."

As boy and man I have always enjoyed the stories of Old King Brady and Young King Brady in Secret Service. But they are as nothing compared to the very long stories about Old King Brady that appeared in Boys of New York. Some of the finest stories ever written about Old King Brady appeared in Boys of New York, often running to 40 or more chapters, and long enough to make two or three issues of Secret Service if they had ever been reprinted in that weekly, but they were not. I do not know where the first story about Old King Brady appeared. It might have been in N. Y. Detective Library, or it might have been in Boys of New York. In the latter, the first story about him seems to have started in #680 under the title of "XXX; or, Old King Brady and an East River Mystery."

The first one I have in my files is #716, "The Haunted Churchyard; or, Old King Brady, the Detective, and the Mystery of the Iron Vault." The others, all complete, are as follows: #736 "99, 99th Street; or, The House Without a Door, a Story of the Thrilling Adventures of Old King Brady, the Detective, in His First Case," #752 "Sentenced for Life; or, Old King Brady's Search for a Ton of Gold," #760 "The House With 30 Steps; or, Old King Brady and the Great Pearl Street Poisoning Case," #771 "Chased Over Three Continents; or, Old King Brady Around the World," #783 "Q; or, Old King Brady Working on the Great Morgan Mystery," #796 "The Terrible Mystery of Car No. 206; or, Old King Brady and the Man of Gold," #821 "The Secret Service Boys; or, Old King Brady Working for the Government," #842 "At Midnight on the

11th; or, Old King Brady and the Mystery of Pier A," #863 "The Great Death Diamond; or, Old King Brady and the Maiden Lane Mystery," #887 "No. 9 on the 9th Floor; or, Old King Brady and the Dark Secrets of the Deserted Pier," #909 "Old King Brady and the Ventriloquist Banker; or, Working a Great Wall Street Mystery," #926 "The Two Stars; or, Old King Brady and Young Sleuth Working the Great Double Trail," #932 "Brady, Green and Sleuth; or, Three Great Detectives Working Against the Bandit King," #996 "On the Night of the 9th; or, Old King Brady and the Man Who Was Never Seen." And there's a list of some of the finest detective tales ever written in my opinion.

As a boy, I cannot recall that I ever read a single story about Young Sleuth. But later on in life I have read possibly a half dozen, Young Sleuth Library. As I recall these were very short tales and very inferior, compared to the long ones about him in Boys of New York. These latter nice long tales are very good.

In my long run I have the following stories of Young Sleuth: #867 "Young Sleuth, the Keen Detective; or, Working With the Inspector," #890 "Young Sleuth and the Man With the Tattooed Arm; or, Tracking Missing Millions," #901 "Young Sleuth's Long Trail; or, The Keen Detective After the James Boys," #879 "Young Sleuth and the Great Wall Street Mystery; or, Tracing the Strange Tragedy of a Brokers Office."

Another detective that I never ran across in my boyhood days was Jerry Owens the Pinkerton detective. Stories about him appeared early in Boys of New York, but I will list only those that are in my own files. These are as follows:

#729 "Jerry Owens and the White Caps; or, Pinkertons Little Detective on a New Trail," #813 "Jerry Owens Among the Moonshiners; or, Pinkertons Little Detective in Tennessee," #859 "Jerry Owens and the Williams Brothers; or, Chased From Shore to Shore," #878 "Jerry Owens and the Beacon Light; or, The Signal Fires of

the Williams Brothers," #947 "Jerry Owens Midnight Signal; or, The Williams Brothers Outwitted."

So far, I have given no authors names, but I will do so now. The Frank Reade and Jack Wright stories were written by "Noname." The Old King Brady stories by A New York Detective, the Young Sleuth stories by Police Captain Howard, and the Jerry Owens stories by Robert Maynard.

The James Boys stories that appeared in Boys of New York were very few, but I have them all and here are the titles:

#892 "Hunted for Ten Years; or, Fighting Against Fate," #913 "Quantrell's Last Ride; or, The Fall of the Scarlet Flag," #928 "The Moonlight Riders; or, Carl Green, the Detective, Working in Three States," #935 "Carl Green, the Detective, and the Knights of the Road," #968 "The Man in the Dungeon; or, The Daring Scheme of the Bandit King," #984 "The Masked Band; or, Carl Green, the Detective's Perilous Work in the West." All written by D. W. Stevens.

So far I have listed titles of my own favorite heroes of a generation ago. And even today, when I read some of them again, I have an attack of nostalgia.

I did not then read those tales in Boys of New York as I very seldom had a chance to read them in that format. I read them in reprint form, such as N. Y. Detective Library, Wide Awake Library, Boys Star Library, Frank Reade Library, Frank Reade Weekly and Pluck and Luck. I can easily look back and see myself as a lad of 12-13 years old in my few leisure hours, in Summer, lying on my stomach under an apple tree eagerly devouring some of these fine tales. Then on a rainy day, I would hike up onto the hay loft and start reading one of these old favorites, but usually the patter of the rain on the roof would eventually lull me to sleep and my fine novel forgotten in oblivion.

Then in Winter, I would stretch out evenings, on a rug before the open fireplace, and read for hours

about my heroes and then going to bed and read more, often as late as midnight. Those boyhood days, alas, they are many, many years gone by and I am an old man now. But often when I run across a dime novel, or story paper read in those bygone days how quick my memory will flip back to just where and when, I first read that particular story. My memory is still keen, and I can tell at once just where and when I first read that tale, whether under the apple tree, the hay loft, before the fire

place, or in bed.

(to be continued)

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